

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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Whole No. 322



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES #4

THREE CHUMS

Another of the short lived Frank Tousey publications issued at the turn of the century. Started November 10, 1899 and the last issue, No. 60, appeared December 28, 1900. It was the usual large size weekly, 8x10 with 32 pages. Stories were about Ben Bright, Dorothy Dare and Tom True at school, on the stage touring America, at college (Columbia) and on foreign travel. The author was S. A. D. Cox who also authored the early Liberty Boys stories. The Liberty Boys of '76 started the week after Three Chums ceased publication.

"YOUTHS COMPANIONS"

by Kenneth M. Daggett

One of the longest life story paper for Young Folks. Starting in 1828 and running weekly into the late 1920s when it finished as a monthly.

"How many old timers remember the many stories that were written by the late Chas. A. Stephens?"

Chas. Asbury Stephens, M.D.A.M., was born in Norway, Maine, Oct. 21, 1847 and for more than fifty years he wrote exclusively for the *Youths Companion* and once estimated that he had written more than three thousand short stories and over a hundred serials for the paper, often writing four or five stories for one issue alone, under different pen names.

Chas. Adams and Henreitta Crosby were the two most popular pen names. He also wrote the so-called "Uncle Javes Stories."

He wrote many books also in his studies of the human being, as he believed that life could be prolonged if the old age cell could be discovered.

His last five books were titled—"Living Matter," "Pluricellular Man," "Long Life," "Salvation by Science," and "Immortal Life." None of these were ever offered for sale.

Dr. Stephens built a home there in Norway, where he could carry out his plans. So he built a wonderful mansion a few miles above the vil-

lage and above the lake, with spacious rooms, wide hallways, piazzas, and balconies. One large room alone was a regular ball room.

This was to be his laboratory where he could entertain up to fifty other doctors and they could carry out research work in summers and travel in winters.

One of his close friends, a Dr. Coons, was to finance the research work, but just as Dr. Stephens got his laboratory home completed, Dr. Coons suddenly died and leaving no provisions for the work being carried out in his will the plans had to be dropped, so Dr. Stephens carried along alone, living in his beautiful home.

He married Miss Christine Stephens in April 1871 (a distant cousin). She died May 22, 1911, and the doctor married a second time to a Miss Minnie Scaler Plummer who was quite an opera singer.

The doctor died at the laboratory Sept. 22, 1931, and his widow lived thirteen years longer, until Jan. 28, 1944.

The history of Norway, Maine, had pictures of the late Dr. C. A. Stephens and his wife and the laboratory home there. The writer was at Norway, Maine, this past spring to visit the old place, as it had been purchased with its contents by a firm of house wreckers and was at the point of being taken down.

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publication in the following month's issue.

The place was full of beautiful old furniture and what not and the writer marveled as he wandered throughout the spacious rooms with their still beautiful hardwood floors, glass partitions and great wide picture windows of a long gone by day.

It seemed just too bad that such a once beautiful home had to be wrecked but it was too badly in need of costly repairs.

The writer has a great many Youths Companions with lots and lots of these fine stories that Dr. Stephens wrote.

However his couple of thousand copies seem small beside the practically complete run from 1871 to 1929 that Mrs. Mittie Hazard of Nichols, N. Y., has in her collection. Mrs. Hazard was a friend of the Stephens and had visited them at the old home in Norway. She has kindly furnished much information about a much gifted writer of stories for young people as well as others. (See Dime Novel Round-up No. 271, June, 1954.)

LOCAL BOYS MAKE GOOD ? or !

By Arthur Moyses

A year or so ago our Noble Lords and the Faithful Commons stood up in the Mother of Parliaments and devoted much time and rhetoric to the vices of the American "horror" comic. It was rhetoric of a high order and as such worthy of a better subject.

The noble gentlemen argued and debated and proved and disproved that the American comic was, or was not, a pernicious influence. An influence that was at any moment liable to make its gentle English reader decapitate his dear old dad and bury his dear old mum with the blood stained meat axe still gracing the silver haloed head. The noble gentlemen made their point and such being the ways of governments, having flogged their theme to their own satisfaction and having decided that any action will not offend the pocket of the voting taxpayer they then made and passed new regulations concern-

ing the import of these mind destroying, soul searing, heart fluttering foreign documents. The noble gentlemen, each in their respective chambers, then sank back into their red plushed seats and proceeded to contemplate new forays against the freedom of the unelected multitude.

For the American comic has always had a sad fascination for the island race. Men and boys who love the rose and the singing bird as though they were rich relations would think nothing of sitting down on some sunny victorian afternoon and gloating over the bizarre home life of the American people.

The scalping and the general shooting that was, for all we know, a normal part of the nineteenth century American social scene, awoke in the placid breasts of the sea girt race a morbid fascination that only the woodcut and the printed page could assuage.

True, we had in the recent past, burned, flogged, hung, racked, stretched and decapitated a sizeable minority of our population but this had been merely the outcome of some dusty legal quarrel and as such one side invariably loses a participant via an opening trap door. All these inconveniences were the outcome of various breeches of the regulations such as killing a rabbit on unenclosed property or regicide and as such could have little interest for the average normal outdoor boy.

It was the American way of life that had such a strange hold on his nascent mind and it was the habits of people like "Rosebud Bob," ever eager to shoot a hole in some passing friend, that must have in the end convinced many Englishmen that Australia was the best country to emigrate to.

The Americans, due no doubt to their whole hearted absorption in the national sport of individual and mass slaughter, found insufficient time to chronicle these local events so that a heavy burden was placed upon the tailored shoulders of the English publishers and when the call came they responded nobly. They flooded the

country with stories of this new race of men at arms and lacking facts they settled for fiction.

Yet of the myths they dreamed up nothing remains. No single character won his way into the folk culture of the people.

I have beside me a first number of the "Boys' Leader," published by Pearson in 1897 and sold for a ½d, yet this English boy's paper of 32 pages devotes all but two of those pages to the American continent. Its locale ranges from the Mexican badlands to ice bound Canada and tells of "Dashing Bob" (not to be confused with "Rosebud Bob") and the "Wharf Boys of New York," "Zach" an old miner and the strong-arm work of New York's late police captain, "Captain Howard."

Yet all are as dead as last weeks newspaper editorials.

No Robin Hood, no Rob Roy, no Long John Silver sprang from their grey crumbling pages. Frozen in their wood-cuts they strike their attitudes and half a century or more later we can only smile at their pretensions. Of them all only our native Weary Willy and Tired Tim made the grade. Of the people, lowly mocked and scorned they have become part of our folk heritage.

Of the same common clay as ourselves they fought the human struggle to survive and to survive with dignity.

These two ragged tramps for 57 years ambled through the carnage of two world wars and the poverty and the weary peace that hyphenated the international dance of death.

They were our Sancho Panza and our Good Soldier Schweik.

Always the underdogs they triumphed over every adversity, pulled the mat from under the flat feet of authority and cocked a grubby snoot at all those who oppress.

A publishers axe in 1953 marked their "official" end yet so much had they become part of our national heritage that Sir Winston Churchill in a post war political speech could refer to them without having to identify them.

It may be their glory or their tragedy that the "establishment" have finally decided to incorporate them into the role of character symbols to illuminate their exhortations to the masses but in spite of this heady glory these two will always be the dumb defenders of the "many" against the "few."

OLD ENGLISH JOURNALS FOR BOYS OF THE EMPIRE

by William M. Burns

(continued from last issue)

Right here I wish to state that this second edition Boys of the Empire started under date of Oct. 9, 1900 and ended Sept. 22, 1906. Then the void was filled, the following week by a new journal titled "The New Boys of England" which ran to only 14 issues. All serial stories ended in No. 311, "Boys of the Empire."

"The New Boys of England" was a gallant attempt to revive that once famous old journal, that first saw the light in 1886, just 40 years previously. But the attempt to revive it was doomed to failure.

The departments and series of stories under a general heading are all reprints of the various series that ran in the first edition such as "Walks Around London," "Stories of the Provinces," "Under the Old Oak Tree," "Our Fireside Corner," etc.

A very large part of the serial stories are reprints from various other older Brett journals, but great stories regardless.

Here are the titles of some of the historical tales. "England's Hero; or, Hereward the Unconquered," "At the Sword's Point; or, The Young Rover of the Sea," "The Terror of the Black Forest," "England of Old; or, Saxons and Normans," "Under the Royal Warrant; or, The Man of Mystery," "The Captain of the Guard; or, The Mysterious Horseman," "Two Hundred Years Ago. A Romance of Life in Old London," "The Boys of Old Eton," etc.

Good sea stories are "The Darling

of Our Crew; or, The Foundlings of the Sea," "Sam Sprightly and the King of the Cannibal Islands," "Wild Jack; or, The Search for Gold," etc.

Good School stories are "Bantam Bob; or, The Hero of the School," "The Life of a Schoolboy," and "Han-ly Panky; or, The Boy that Couldn't Keep Still."

Three good stories about life in Russia are, "In the Czar's Name; or, For Russian Gold," "Will and His Friend Wobbs; or, Dauntless Through All. A Story of Siberia," and "Siberian Tom; or, In Spite of the Czar."

Another good tale that comes under no special category is "King Pharaoh's Treasure; or, Our Boys in Wonderland."

Illustrations average up about the same as those in the original edition.

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings
Fisherville, Mass.

Have you seen the Holiday Magazine for February 1959. It has a fine article in it by Charles Bragin, with a picture of Frank Reade Weekly Mag. I haven't seen it yet, but they say it's a dandy. Gerald McIntosh wrote me first about it.

Bill Burns of Rockland, Maine, fell on the ice around Feb. 1st and cracked his hip. He now has a peg in there poor fellow.

Bill Claggett is still in plenty of pain in his shoulder and side. He now has an enlarged liver, besides arthritis. It's tough when we get old isn't it, Bill?

L. D. Webster of Lake Worth, Fla. died Feb. 1st, and 5 or 6 days before it I got a letter from him. You never can tell. Bro. Webster was over 80.

Gripper Guinon paid a visit to Gerald McIntosh Jan. 17th and had a great time looking over Gerald's collection of Life Mags from No. 1 in 1936 up to the present number, also other magazines, novels, and whatnot.

Don Learnard and wife have been down to Florida visiting, and while there, Don called on Charlie Daniel,

Roy Morris, and L. D. Webster before he died, and had a fine time. Don has met since he joined the H. H. Bro. 52 members, that's a record, I'll say. He wants to visit with Charlie Duprez and others on his way home.

Prof. Johannsen sent me a clipping from a for sale book catalogue of which some book dealer offers Happy Hours Magazine, March-April, 1927, issue, which gives a correct list of members of the James and Younger Outlaw band, priced at \$4.00. As the professor points out, if the Happy Hours Mag cost 20c per copy, that is a 20 times increase, which is some thing to brag about. If his Beadle book would increase that much, it would be worth \$400.00.

Prof. Johannsen is still working on his Song Index, but as a fellow says, getting nowhere. Says he will look in some of the old newspaper files of N. Y. Tribune and the Times of 1865-6-7 and 8 for advertisements of old lists of songs.

P. J. Moran says that the missions in the Philippines are collecting old novels and books, so as to keep the young folks out of mischief. A swell idea, but some children nowadays are getting beyond hope.

In "The Boston Daily Globe," for Feb. 21st, 1901, there is a bit of news on two Somerville, Mass., boys who started for the Wild West, with an orange crate full of dime novels and 2 pistols, and seems they were picked up in New York, when one of the boys dropped a pistol, and as a cop was near, he nabbed him and his friend. Guess we all had funny ideas of the west and Indians in our younger days.

Is it true Ken Daggett is selling off some of his Pluck & Lucks, or is it some duplicates that he has accumulated?

Ralph Webster is trying to sell L. D. Webster's collection of old books, novels, papers, stamps and whatnot (same address as Lloyd), 4706 Arlette Court, Lake Worth, Fla.

Lou Kohrt, 3749 Robinhood, Houston 7, Texas, has a lot of stuff for sale.

Another old timer is gone, remember Charles Woodward, that used to live up in South Ashburnham, Mass. 8 or 10 years ago or more, and moved up to New Hampshire a few years ago? I wrote him and the letter came back stamped on the envelope, Deceased. So I don't know when he died, but some time between now and a year ago. He was a member of our order at one time.

Anthony J. Kigas, 258 Milbury St., Worcester 10, Mass., has a very nice display of old time Boys Weeklies and Libraries up at his store. Lots of reprints too, sure makes it very interesting.

TO COLLECTORS OF FRANK READE STORIES

by W. M. Burns

How many of you know that there was at least one short story published about Frank Reade Jr.?

As a collector of "Muldoon" stories in Wide Awake and Comic Librarys, I recently got in Comic Library No. 127, titled "Muldoon's Christmas." It

contained the typical "Muldoon" illustration on the cover page and naturally I concluded that it was the average length of the rest of the "Muldoon" tales. But imagine my surprise when opening the novel I found that the "Muldoon" story ran to only five and one half pages, and the rest of the novel taken up by six other short stories which are all Christmas stories. Among them is "Frank Reade Jr.'s Christmas in the Air" which runs to nearly four and a half pages.

The novel contains five inside illustrations.

It is my belief that this is the only short story about "Frank Reade" ever to be published. And the same applies to the "Muldoon" story. Certainly they are the only ones I ever saw, or ever heard of. This novel is a unique item and well worthy of being included in any collection of "Frank Reade," or "Muldoon" stories.

Incidentally "Muldoon's Christmas" was also published in Wide Awake Library #922.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 6. George French, Kezar Falls, Maine (New Address)
- 231. J. C. Dykes, 4511 Guilford Road, College Park, Md. (Old Member)
- 232. Perry E. Gianakos, New York University, Washington Square, New York 3, N. Y. (New member)
- 233. Keith H. Thompson, 922 Dryden Road, Ithaca, New York (New mem.)

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Most items from my 25,000 item collection are for sale.

87 School Street

Edward T. LeBlanc

Fall River, Mass.

THE FABULOUS TOM MIX

By Olive S. Mix (his wife)

Exciting life and careers—Cow Puncher, Texas Ranger, Wild West Star, Rough Rider, Frontier Sheriff, etc., of the famous movie hero. Well illustrated, D/W, 1957. Pub. by Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood, N. J. A \$3.95 book, nice, for only \$2.75.

RALPH F. CUMMINGS

FISHERVILLE, MASS.

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(The only sure way that old time novels can be preserved without rapid deterioration is to bind them. All the above have been professionally bound and consequently are in good, sound condition. The cost of binding today is almost prohibitive, and you are saved this expense when you invest in any of the above.)

A considerable number of the following book-form reprints still on hand, priced at only 50c each. Each one contains 3 or 4 of the original dime or nickel novels. Why not stock up on some of these? In a few years it will be impossible to get them in such good condition at twice or three times the price. **BUFFALO BILL BORDER STORIES, MAGNET AND NEW MAGNET LIBRARY, WESTERN STORY LIBRARY, ADVENTURE LIBRARY, ROUND THE WORLD LIBRARY, MERRIWELL SERIES, SPORT STORY LIBRARY, EARLY WESTERN LIFE, etc.** Write for lists.

J. P. GUINON**P. O. Box 214****Little Rock, Ark.**

ALGER — BUNTLINE — NOVELS & STORY PAPERS

- N. Y. Weekly 1887 (52 issues) Bound. Spine poor. Nick Carter in "A Wall Street Haul," Buntline: "Texas Jack, White King of the Pawnees." Alger: "Oliver, the Outcast." \$10.00
- N. Y. Weekly Aug. 5, 1872 to Nov. 3, 1873. Bound. (66 consecutive). Alger: "Brave and Bold," "The Western Boy." Buntline: "Life's Peril," "Mountain Tom," "Texas Jack," "Barnacle Bill." \$15.
- Beadle's Saturday Journal No. 261 to 293 Loose. (33 consecutive). Wm. F. Cody: "Deadly Eye, the Unknown Scout." Other authors "Red Bob, the Boy Road Agent," "Tiger Dick," "Overland Kit," "Yellowstone Jack," "The Flying Yankee," etc. \$15.00
- Boys Best Weekly (Jack Standfast) No. 7 to 22, pocket size, \$15.00 Large size issues, 75c each.
- Three Chums No. 8, 12, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 31, 36, 38, 49, 56. Average condition, \$1.25 each.
- Wide Awake Weekly No. 3, 4, 5, 7, 18, 19, 21, 35. Average, some have water stain. 75c each.
- Nick Carter Weekly No. 19, 33, 331, 334, 335, 336, 337, 349, 359, 360, Fair and average, \$1.00 each.
- George Reynold's big novel, "Joseph Wilmot, the Man Servant" in two bound volumes. 52 illustrations. Fine. \$4.00
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- Beadle's Youth's Casket. \$1.50 per copy.
- Beadle's Monthly. \$1.00 per copy. Complete set (18 nos.) \$17.50

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RALPH P. SMITH

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